

NEWS RELEASE
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PICKWICK'S 3D TUBE LASER SAVES HOURS OF LABOR

Save time, save money and increase sales. It's a simple equation with a dramatic solution:
a robotic 3D laser.

At Pickwick Manufacturing Services, a Cedar Rapids, Iowa-based contract metal fabrication firm, the solution resides in the Fabrigear 300, a laser-cutting system that transforms 26-foot lengths of tube, channel, beam & angle and extrusions into precise, ready-to-weld or assemble pieces.

"The Fabrigear's ability to cut precise, tight joints and tabs and slots out of structural steel saves a manufacturer or contractor hours of labor," said Walt Corey, President of Pickwick. "A customer recently eliminated the need for a \$25,000 custom welding fixture thanks to this laser cutter."

According to Corey, the Fabrigear's 26 axes provide three dimensions of laser accuracy to joint preparation, and they eliminate machining and fit-up problems. The laser system automatically loads and unloads and reduces assembly steps with its ability to perform multiple tasks in one pass.

“In a single operation that takes just minutes, the Fabrigear can cut a tube or beam to length, provide bevel edges, cut and tap holes and more,” explained Corey. “Its automated processing provides far greater precision, speed and quality than manual drilling, cutting, beveling and so on. Separate setups and operations are things of the past.”

Pickwick has developed applications for the Fabrigear in environmental, wind energy, agricultural and other industries. According to Corey, the Fabrigear takes only 80 minutes to complete one structure that had required 6 hours to complete in 3 separate operations.

“We have begun collaborating with our clients to develop methods to eliminate fixtures and tack welding, saving them even more costs and time. When it’s applicable, the Fabrigear typically saves huge amounts of labor,” said Corey. “It fits in perfectly with the Lean philosophy and takes structural steel processing to an elevated level of automation to fit our customers’ needs.”

In 1985, Pickwick became the first in the U.S. to purchase a sheet laser. Corey said that the Fabrigear does for structural steel what the sheet laser did for sheet metal.

“There are no limits, and no tools to wear out,” Corey said.

The Fabrigear is featured on www.pickwick.com, where the laser’s potential is demonstrated in a video. [SEE ATTACHED PHOTOS]

Pickwick Manufacturing Services has served international clients from its location in Cedar Rapids, Iowa since 1939. It is one of the 400 fastest-growing, privately held manufacturers in the United States according to *INC Magazine* (*INC* 5000, 2008). Pickwick holds the distinction of purchasing the first sheet laser in the U.S. in 1985. Details are available at www.pickwick.com.

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